

Time in our Times. Reflections on Social Time, Acceleration and Hypermodernity



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Thursday, March 23, 2017, 4:15pm

Liberal Arts College, Concordia University

Harvey Shulman Seminar Room, RR-02

Examining time in our times reveals a stunning paradox. On the one hand, the innovation of clocks since the 13th century has allowed societies to gain an unprecedented mastery over time by mechanizing, organizing and quantifying it. We can now track time to its innermost minute durations, we measure and monitor it up to a millionth of a second. Yet, on the other hand, we experience time as an external objective force to which we must adjust, something that dictates our behaviour and controls us. At the moment of the most elaborated and sophisticated social time regime in history, we find the most rushed, anxious, and out of time historical creatures. It is as if the more we master time, the more it masters us. This lecture seeks to engage with recent discussions of social acceleration and hypermodernity, and evaluate in what ways these concepts help us think through the complexities of our relationship to time.

